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The Specifics of the Differentiated Approach in Teaching English in a Mixed Learning Environment

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Abstract:

The present study is aimed at studying the specifics of a differentiated approach in teaching English in a mixed educational environment. For this purpose, the authors used a differentiated approach, which is necessary for the selection of tasks with different levels of students' knowledge and for the purpose of effective teaching and development of English language knowledge. Having considered the peculiarities of the organization of educational activities of schoolchildren in English lessons, it was revealed that the use of a phased organization of educational activities, taking into account the level of knowledge, skills and abilities, increases the effectiveness of differentiation.

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Introduction

A modern school in Kazakhstan should be focused on responsibility for results and professionalism. Teaching is hard work, and the level of professionalism of the teacher should be extremely high. The new standards make it possible to meet the individual needs of the child in the in-depth study of any discipline, take into account the profile of training, use project activities. In order to correctly and timely identify the inclinations of the child, understand his interests, push him in the right direction, an individual approach is needed [1].

Nowadays there is a change in the educational paradigm: the rejection of the concept of «encyclopedism», when the main indicator of a person's education was considered to be the volume of his knowledge: orientation to the development of the student's personality, mastering the methods of mental, practical activity, assistance in personal and professional self-determination, self-realization. The modern orientation of the pedagogical process requires further development of personality-oriented theories and learning technologies. With the transition to a new content of the education system, the concept of differentiated learning is becoming widespread. The introduction of differentiation into the educational process, philologists believe, is very relevant, which will improve the school and have a positive impact on the health of students.

It should be noted that in the conditions of mixed learning, one of the most pressing problems of teaching English at school is individual and differentiated approaches. The main difficulty is caused by the inability to find the optimal combination of individual, group and frontal forms of work when teaching English. The effectiveness of teaching a foreign language largely depends on the clear and flexible organization of the educational process in the classroom, on the ability of the teacher to take into account the actual assimilation of specific program material by students, as well as the individual characteristics of each student. Interest in learning is promoted not only by independent, but also by creative, search work, the application of knowledge in a new situation, the use of visual aids, emotional impact. The components of individualization and differentiation of teaching in English lessons are control and self-control.

With self-control, it is necessary to comprehend the purpose of the activity and the pattern with which he can compare the course and result of educational work. The teacher comments on the sample action, its detailed execution. The elements of self-control are laid already at the initial planning of the student's work. In order to implement a differentiated approach to schoolchildren when monitoring reading, the teacher needs to solve a number of organizational issues: based on the level of language training of students, he should divide the class conditionally into subgroups equal in training; the teacher needs to have a psychological characteristic of the class, which should include the level of development of those characteristics of students that determine the success of mastering reading foreign language texts (memory, thinking, attention, the level of general development) [2].

Methods and materials

When selecting and compiling differentiated assignments, it is important for a foreign language teacher to talk with teachers in other subjects in order to learn about the interests and inclinations of children. Individualization should not be reduced to simple differentiation. Differentiated learning is based precisely on the selection of individual knowledge, depending on the abilities of students (memory, speech hearing, etc.) and the level of formation of speech skills and abilities. The problem of a differentiated approach has always been and is very relevant. So working with the text in the lesson, you can offer students such multi-level tasks:

1. Strong (level of knowledge) - students receive the task «Tell me what the children did in the summer» (verbs in Infinitive are written on the blackboard).
2. Average (level of knowledge) - make sentences on cards: insert the desired auxiliary verb in the desired form;
3. Weak (level of knowledge) - cards where it is necessary to put a verb in the form of Participle 2 (verbs are given at the end of a sentence).

As a result, it turns out that everyone worked on the same picture, but at the same time performed different tasks. Conclusion: working out grammatical phenomena in this way, students assimilate them at a level accessible to them. When controlling the understanding of the text, the main group of students (with an average level of training) can receive questions to the text, the answers to which will convey the content of the text in some detail. The goal is only to control reading comprehension. But the teacher checks their fulfillment. It should be noted that tasks in the form of questions can be presented both by ear and in writing [3].

For students with weaker training, questions are formed in such a way that the answers to them briefly convey the main content of the text. They can also receive cards with sentences in their native language that convey the main idea of the text (they should find their equivalents in a foreign language in the text they read). These students can be given tasks suggested by the author. For example, find sentences whose content contradicts the text you read. Students with a high level of learning can retell the entire text, express their attitude to what they read or answer questions. The following method of reading control is also effective: for a «strong» group, a task is given to draw up a detailed plan for the text, for a more «weak» one - to number the points of the plan given by the teacher in the wrong sequence.

In front-line work, the teacher orally expounds texts of varying difficulty, that is, at first he simplifies his material, and then complicates it; conducts an educational conversation, during which he encourages students to create a problem and show their knowledge beyond the program; takes into account individual differences in role-playing, discussions.

Group work is used as a means of activating students. During a conversation in a small group, a student can express his opinion, participate more actively in solving educational tasks in accordance with his interests and abilities.

Students can be divided into several groups either by interests or by abilities: the first group consists of well-performing students, the second group consists of medium-successful and the third group consists of low-performing students. The goal is the same for the whole class, but the methods are different for each group. Students of the first group, who can work independently, receive tasks for independent work containing elements of creativity. You can offer groups.

The above forms of differentiation of learning create opportunities to improve the psychological climate. So the frontal form of work favors interchange, mutual enrichment, emotional «charging», which raises the activity of each student.

During group work, closer relationships and contacts arise between the teacher and the student, conditions are created for the manifestation of emotions, the expression of needs, the development of interests, and great opportunities are also provided in the variation of the content and methods of transmitting information, in helping each student.

Owing to individual work it can be possible to differentiate the content, the degree of difficulty of educational tasks, methods of action, creates favorable conditions for the formation of an individual style of activity [4].

Typology of exercises:

1. Adaptive exercises can be of two types: the exercises of the first type are auxiliary in nature, their purpose is to help subgroups of weaker students cope with the tasks recommended to the whole class;

The exercises of the second type are aimed at the formation of foreign language speech skills and abilities in specific communication situations, taking into account the peculiarities of the personal sphere of students, their interests, the context of activity, the factor of interpersonal communication.

2. The task of corrective exercises is to contribute to the elimination of existing and newly emerging gaps in English language training and the further development of individual mental processes and personality traits of students, especially important for the successful mastery of the English language. Corrective exercises aimed at eliminating gaps can be any exercise if its main goal is to develop skills and abilities that should have been formed in the student earlier [5].

3. Improving exercises provide a kind of

The exercise can be called improving if the following basic conditions are observed:

- it contributes to the purposeful development of the student's personal sphere;
- meets the level of training;
- provides the conditions for creating a speech-thinking task;
- forms an individual style of activity.

Research shows that all types of individualized exercises should be used in teaching both language material and various types of speech activity. The effectiveness of the proposed exercises and forms of training are confirmed in practice. The production of cards, diagrams and other supports takes a lot of time, but with their help, the foreign language speech activity of all students is largely activated, interest in learning English is maintained.

Results and discussion

Thus, it should be noted the disadvantages that the differentiated approach suffers from (in comparison with the individualization of learning): in most cases, it is applied after identifying gaps in the student's knowledge, and its function is to «pull up» the student;

A paradoxical situation is created in which stronger students who work quickly due to their abilities and who are less in need of exercises receive additional ones, while weak ones perform easier tasks in smaller numbers. Such an organization of work leads to a slowdown in increasing the level of knowledge of both. A differentiated approach in the lesson is very often aimed at identifying weaknesses in students' knowledge, while a true individual approach should mainly serve to identify and develop the strengths of individuality. The differentiated approach practically excludes cooperation between students.

The problem of bridging the gap between the so-called strong, average and weak students can be solved only in connection with the problem of combining and correctly using individual, paired, group and collective forms of work. This requires «special organizational methods of work that the teacher uses in the classroom in order to teach everyone, while simultaneously creating the most favorable conditions for everyone's learning

This is the only way to increase the efficiency of the lesson. To achieve this goal, the following organizational techniques can be proposed:

1. When presenting new grammatical material, the rule is deduced by students with a weak ability to communicate functional signs of a grammatical phenomenon;

2. Purposeful use of supports of various types: semantic, verbal, illustrative, schematic, properly selected support will help the weak [6].
3. The order of the survey. The weak win by getting a sample - the correct answer of the strong students. However, the sequence «strong - medium - weak» is not given once and for all. For example, in a lesson on the formation of logical skills, the weak receive cards with a ready-made microtext, where the key phrase is emphasized, when checking the understanding of the listened microtext, you can first turn to them: «What do you think?»
4. Varying the time to prepare an answer: the weak receive a triple portion of time;
5. Using simplified tasks. It is used mainly in homework. For example, after a lesson on improving speaking skills, the weak should complete the task based on spoken text; the average - based on experience, but with supports, and the strong - without support;
6. Use additional extracurricular material (for strong and medium).
7. More frequent survey of students with weak abilities. This activates the students, develops their ability, teaches them to work the whole lesson.

We cannot assume that the weak should work less. Their abilities develop, and success comes in activity.

Conclusion

We believe that the main objectives of a differentiated approach in teaching English are to meet the cognitive needs of both strong and weak students, taking into account their individual preparedness, individual qualities of each.

Based on the direction of our research, we believe that differentiation of learning offers tasks of different difficulty and complexity, the use of which makes a differentiated approach in the conditions of mixed teaching of English to schoolchildren more effective. Having considered the features of the organization of educational activities of schoolchildren in English lessons, it was revealed that the use of a phased organization of educational activities, taking into account the level of knowledge, skills, increases the effectiveness of differentiation.

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